

# HOSPITALITY SALARY TRENDS 2025

Your one-stop guide to  
salaries and benefits in the  
UK hospitality industry



# Contents

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|                |   |
|----------------|---|
| <b>Page 03</b> | Introduction  |
| <b>Page 04</b> | Hospitality salary trends                                       |
| <b>Page 08</b> | Hospitality benefit trends                                      |
| <b>Page 09</b> | Employee salary insights  |
| <b>Page 10</b> | Looking ahead: Candidate motivations and expectations           |
| <b>Page 13</b> | From pay to perks: How to attract and retain hospitality talent |
| <b>Page 15</b> | Final thoughts  |
| <b>Page 16</b> | Overview of Caterer.com   |



# Introduction

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Whether it's the little touches that create unforgettable guest experiences or building the happy, engaged, and loyal team that delivers them, every detail matters in our industry.

At the heart of this is a competitive salary and benefits package. They not only attract talent but also retain the brilliant people that hospitality businesses, and the whole industry, need to thrive.

Meeting candidate expectations while navigating today's economic pressures can be challenging. However, with the right insights, it's also an opportunity to stand out as an employer of choice.

To support you, we've analysed over **17 million job ads** across 23 industries, including **1.2 million job ads** across hospitality, to uncover key salary and benefit trends shaping the hospitality sector. This report is designed to help you benchmark your offer, understand what candidates value most, and make confident decisions in a competitive market.



And it's not all about pay. Our findings show that benefits like **flexible working hours** are becoming just as important as salary for many candidates. Understanding these priorities, along with broader trends such as changes to the National Minimum Wage and the gender pay gap, can help employers craft offers that stand out.

But with **2 in 5 (44%)** hospitality workers considering a job change in the next 12 months, there's no time to waste.

So, whether you're refining your salary strategy, rethinking your benefits, or benchmarking against the competition, this report provides the insights you need to shape your approach in 2025 and beyond.

Let's dive in.

## **Calvern James**

Director of Hospitality,  
Caterer.com

# Hospitality salary trends

## Salaries at a glance

**£27.1k**

Gross median salary in hospitality

**+4.5%**

compared to 2023



The median salary in hospitality now stands at £27,100, up **4.5%** compared to last year. While some industries have seen stronger increases, including customer service (**14.8%**), healthcare (**14.5%**), and retail (**13%**), hospitality salaries are still moving in the right direction.

Five years ago, the average salary in the sector was £21,503. Since then, wages have risen by **25%**, showing real progress. While there is still work to do to remain competitive, this steady growth is a positive sign for employers looking to attract and retain talent.

This upward trend is reflected in salary ranges too, moving from £25,200 - £26,300 in 2023 to £26,700 - £27,800 in 2024.

Even so, only **56%** of hospitality workers say they're satisfied with their pay. That's below the **63%** average across all industries, putting hospitality in the top five least satisfied sectors.

When looking at the bigger picture, the median salary in the UK across all industries is £35,650, which highlights the gap hospitality businesses still face when competing for talent.

Legislative changes, like increases to the National Living Wage, also play a role. Rates for those aged 21 and over will rise by **17.2%** in April 2025, while 18-20-year-olds will see an even larger increase of **33.5%**.

### What is median salary?

The median is the middle value in a dataset and as opposed to the average, it excludes extreme values. We use gross median salary by industry, city and region in our report as this gives a more accurate picture of the typical salary and is a better indicator of overall income distribution.

NB: All salary figures used in this report come from advertised salary data.

## Salaries by job role

Looking at the top 10 most advertised roles within the hospitality sector, we see a mix of salaries that reflect both the responsibilities and skill levels required. With these figures being based on hundreds of thousands of real job vacancies, they can serve as a useful benchmark when reviewing the salaries you offer.

As expected, Chefs, particularly at the more senior levels, lead the way with salaries reaching up to nearly £40,000. This is a significant jump compared to more junior kitchen roles, such as Kitchen Assistants or Kitchen Porters, where salaries range between £23,000 and £25,000.

While there's a noticeable gap in pay between kitchen and non-kitchen roles, there's clear potential for growth across the board. The demand for skilled staff remains high, and hospitality businesses can look to improve their compensation packages to attract and retain top talent.

### Salary range by 10 most advertised roles



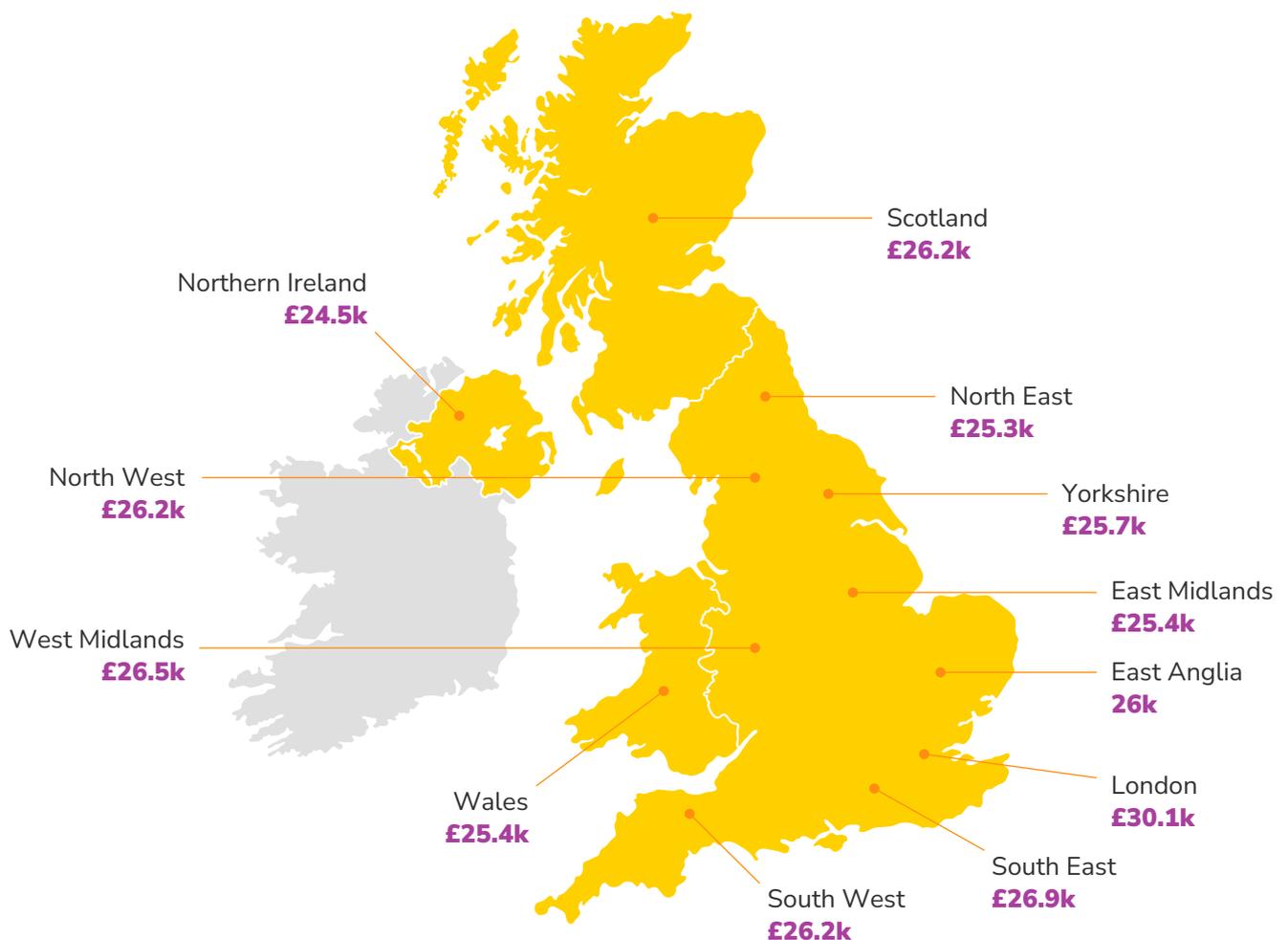
## Regional snapshot

Hospitality salaries vary quite a bit depending on where you are in the UK. London stands out with a median of £30,150, but other areas like the South East and West Midlands also offer competitive salaries. Meanwhile, places like Northern Ireland and Yorkshire tend to see lower wages, sitting closer to £25,000.

Cities like Manchester, Edinburgh, and Birmingham sit comfortably around the £27,000 mark, while coastal cities such as Plymouth and Portsmouth have salaries around £25,000.

These regional differences highlight the importance of considering location when crafting your salary offers. After all, what works in one place might not be enough in another.

## Median hospitality salary across UK regions



## Median hospitality salary in UK cities

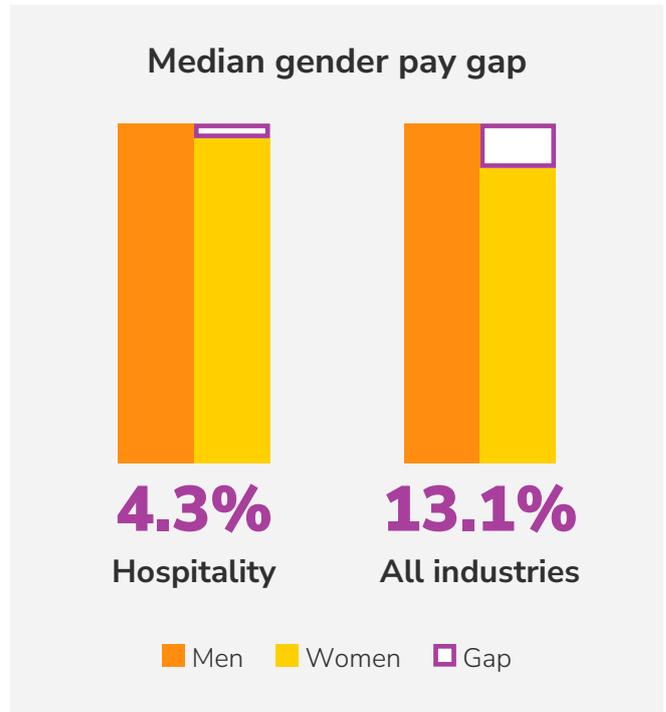
|                               |                               |                                |                              |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Aberdeen ..... <b>£25.6k</b>  | Edinburgh..... <b>£27.1k</b>  | Manchester ..... <b>£27.2k</b> | Portsmouth..... <b>£25k</b>  |
| Belfast..... <b>£25k</b>      | Glasgow..... <b>£26.1k</b>    | Newcastle ..... <b>£25.8k</b>  | Sheffield..... <b>£24.9k</b> |
| Birmingham .... <b>£27.4k</b> | Leeds..... <b>£26.4k</b>      | Nottingham..... <b>£25.1k</b>  |                              |
| Bristol..... <b>£26.4k</b>    | London..... <b>£30.1k</b>     | Oxford ..... <b>£27.1k</b>     |                              |
| Cardiff..... <b>£25.4k</b>    | Liverpool ..... <b>£26.1k</b> | Plymouth..... <b>£25k</b>      |                              |

## Focus on: gender pay gap

The gender pay gap in hospitality stands at **4.3%**, significantly lower than the UK-wide median of **13.1%**. This means that for every £1 a man earns in hospitality, a woman earns 95p. Compared to 87p across all industries, this is to the industry's credit.

Several factors help explain this. Hospitality often has clear, standardised pay rates for roles like front-of-house or kitchen staff, which makes it harder for gender disparities to creep in. Plus, the strong representation of women in the sector, including in leadership roles, has contributed to a fairer overall pay structure.

While this data, sourced from the Office for National Statistics (ONS), is a sign of progress, and something worth celebrating, there's still more to do to achieve full pay parity and ensure fair representation at every level.



# Hospitality benefit trends

While salary is key, it's the wider package that can set your business apart.

In this section, we'll explore the most common benefits offered in hospitality, how they compare to other industries, and what workers value most.

## Top 5 most desired vs. advertised benefits

The benefits most desired by hospitality workers reveal a clear gap between what people are looking for and what employers offer.

Flexible working is the standout, with **35%** of hospitality staff rating it as their top priority, compared to just **1 in 10** employers advertising it. Similarly, **30%** of people want enhanced sick pay above the legal minimum, but just **2%** of job adverts mention this benefit.

Compared to the wider market, performance bonuses are also lagging, with only **2%** of hospitality roles offering them, compared to **14%** across other industries. On the plus side, benefits like free or discounted food and learning and training appear more frequently in hospitality ads compared to other sectors.

This comes as hospitality employers are starting to expand their benefits packages. Life insurance, career development, pension contributions, and cycle-to-work schemes have seen the largest increase and now feature in twice as many job adverts as last year. This is a step in the right direction.

By addressing these gaps, hospitality employers can attract and retain the talent they need while staying competitive in today's market.



\*Desired: workers seek sick pay above what's legally required; advertised: employer offers sick pay.

# Employee salary insights

We can learn a lot from the experiences of hospitality workers themselves.

While **63%** received a pay rise in the past year, this falls behind the UK average of **75%** and other sectors like healthcare (**78%**) and retail (**72%**).

There are other areas where hospitality could improve:

- Just **23%** of hospitality staff say they receive annual pay reviews, compared to **40%** across all sectors
- Only **17%** of hospitality workers see their salary adjusted after a promotion or role change, far below the overall figure of **32%**
- Opportunities for feedback are also fewer, with only **30%** of hospitality workers having performance reviews, compared to **45%** in other industries

These gaps may leave employees feeling undervalued and limit opportunities for progression.

Despite these challenges, over half (**56%**) of hospitality workers are satisfied with their earnings, and **7 in 10 (69%)** with their benefits. While slightly lower than the UK average, this level of satisfaction is encouraging, considering the gaps in offerings.

What this tells us is that we have a passionate, loyal, and dedicated workforce who are eager to stay in the industry. They just need to be convinced that the right opportunities and support are available to them.

To support this, hospitality employers can consider adopting more structured review processes and aligning salary progression opportunities with other industries. These changes not only help employees feel valued but can also make a huge difference in retention and satisfaction, ultimately improving the overall success of the sector.



## Salary satisfaction



## Benefit satisfaction



# Looking ahead: candidate motivations and expectations

So, what does this mean for your team and your ability to attract talent?

Our research shows that hospitality professionals have clear goals for their careers. To stay competitive, employers need to understand the challenges they face and what they value most in a role.

## Understanding the financial concerns of your workforce

Firstly, let's consider their financial goals. Salary is more than just a number on a payslip. It's key to each team member's financial security and future ambitions.

But with rising living costs, **2 in 3 (65%)** hospitality employees are worried about their financial security over the next 12 months.

Their long-term goals reflect these concerns:

- **30%** are simply focused on having a comfortable standard of living, compared to **21%** of workers in other industries
- **23%** are saving for retirement
- **18%** hope to have more disposable income

However, **42%** don't believe they can achieve these goals on their current salary. And it's easy to see why when **24%** say they haven't received a pay rise in recent memory, and **29%** feel their pay no longer reflects living costs.

As a result, it's no surprise that they're less satisfied with their earnings than the average person in the UK.

## Salary expectations in 2025

Currently, a quarter (**25%**) of hospitality workers are not expecting to receive a pay rise in the next 12 months – nearly double the national average of **13%**. And for those who do expect one, they anticipate a modest **3.7%** increase, compared to **4.7%** across all industries.

So, hopes aren't high. But what happens if there's no pay rise, or if it falls short of expectations? We found that:

- **27%** of hospitality workers would look for a job elsewhere
- **11%** would feel less motivated at work

With **3 in 5** hospitality employees comfortable asking for a pay rise and willing to negotiate to get what they want; proactive salary benchmarking is key. Taking the initiative with transparent and meaningful salary conversations can help maintain team morale and avoid surprises down the line.



## A growing willingness to change roles

So, with all these things at play, we could be set to see a hospitality workforce on the move.

**2 in 5 (44%)** hospitality workers plan to look for a new job within the next 12 months. While this is just higher than the **42%** average across all industries, it still points to potential retention challenges within the industry.

Of more immediate concern is that **18%** of hospitality employees are currently job hunting, compared to just **11%** in other sectors.

But what are they looking for?

Their top priorities in a new role include:

- A higher salary (**36%**)
- A change of scene (**26%**)
- A better work-life balance (**25%**)
- Looking for a fresh start in a different sector (**21%**)
- Career growth and opportunities (**17%**)
- Greater flexibility (**17%**)
- Better job security (**14%**)

Notably, salary tops the list. And even small wage increases are a draw with:

- **21%** willing to change jobs for a **1–5%** pay rise (vs. **14%** in all industries)
- **32%** willing to change jobs for a **6–10%** pay rise

Beyond these modest increases, it's concerning to see that **1 in 5 (21%)** are considering leaving the hospitality entirely, potentially undoing a lot of the fantastic progress made in promoting the sector in recent years.

With **64%** of hospitality workers confident they can secure a new job they want; employers must act quickly to address retention challenges and keep their best talent.



# 1 in 5

hospitality workers are currently looking for a new role



## How benefits and transparency impact retention

To retain their star performers, employers should focus on what matters most to their teams.

When asked what would bring their job search to a standstill, they told us that they would stay with their current employer for:

- A pay rise in line with or above inflation (38%)
- A one-off cost of living bonus (29%)
- Flexible working hours (22%)
- More overtime opportunities (18%)
- More assurances over job security (18%)

Alongside matching market trends, flexible working emerges here as a key factor for retention, underlining the importance of offering meaningful benefits.

What's more, 84% of hospitality workers said they'd prioritise flexible working hours over a pay rise. This is an incredible statistic, especially compared to the 67% who said similar in other industries. For many, flexible working means non-traditional hours (20%), part-time roles (13%), or compressed workweeks (8%). For employers, it could be a cost-effective way to reduce staff turnover.



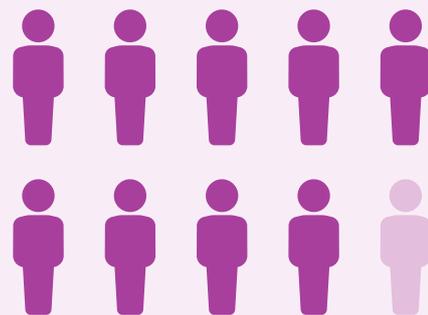
We also found:

- 78% would opt for enhanced sick pay over a salary increase, compared to 60% across other industries
- 70% would choose free or discounted food and drink over a pay rise, compared to 53% in other sectors

These benefits also play a vital role when it comes to attracting talent. However, salary transparency is just as important. Hospitality workers overwhelmingly value clear pay information, with:

- 83% more likely to apply for roles with listed salary details
- 80% viewing employers more positively when salaries are disclosed
- 72% abandoning applications without salary details

With 3 in 4 people (76%) citing salary as the most important factor when deciding on a job, and 62% comfortable negotiating pay during the hiring process, implementing clear salary bands not only sets expectations and builds trust but also ensures you attract the right candidates, saving time and improving your chances of finding the right hire.



Nearly

**9 in 10**

hospitality workers  
would skip a pay rise for  
flexible working hours

# From pay to perks: how to attract and retain hospitality talent

Our data shows that hospitality job postings are up **35%** year-on-year. With competition this high, recruitment and retention can feel daunting.

The good news? Even modest pay rises, and meaningful benefits can make a big difference. If a complete overhaul isn't feasible, a few small changes can still have a significant impact.

While there's a risk of losing skilled team members, there's also a fantastic opportunity to get ahead of the competition.

Here's how to do it:

## 1. Level up your salaries

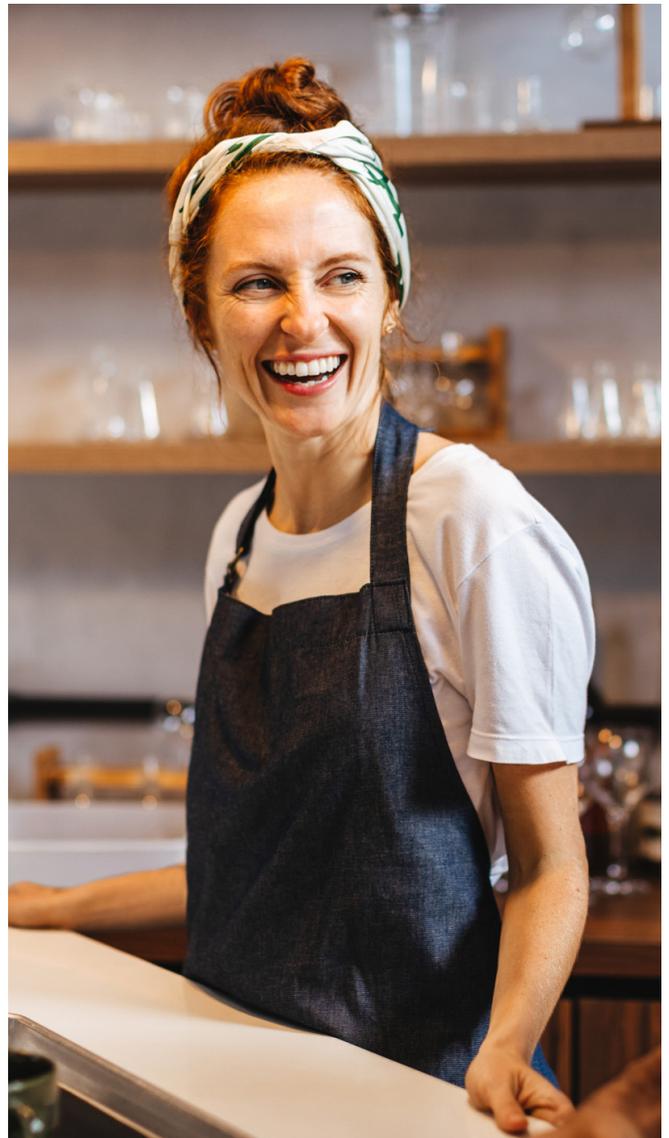
Hospitality salaries are slipping behind other industries, and with the rising cost of living, closing this gap could help you stand out. As we've covered, even small increases, such as a **1–5%** pay rise, can make a big difference. This is particularly true when you compare the cost of salary increases to the expenses associated with recruitment, training, and high turnover.

Start by benchmarking salaries against competitors in your local area and similar sectors, such as retail. Aligning with inflation is a strong starting point, and even modest adjustments can improve morale, retention, and your reputation as an employer.

## 2. Be transparent with pay

Wages should never be a mystery. Right now, **39%** of hospitality job listings don't include salary details. This is a missed opportunity, especially when **83%** of workers say they're more likely to apply for roles with clear pay information.

Publishing salary bands doesn't just build trust; it also helps tackle gender pay gaps, attracts candidates who are a better fit for the role, and increases the chances that they'll accept your offer.



### 3. Offer benefits that matter

Benefits are often the deciding factor in whether someone will apply for or stay in a role. Our research shows that:

- **58%** of workers wouldn't apply if there was no learning or training on offer
- **40%** wouldn't apply without clear career development opportunities
- **32%** wouldn't apply for a job without flexible working options
- **25%** wouldn't apply if sick pay wasn't above legal requirements
- **17%** would avoid roles without free or discounted food

While hospitality may not be able to offer remote working in many cases, flexible working is still a strong selling point. Whether it's non-traditional hours, compressed workweeks, or part-time roles, this can be a key differentiator.

Similarly, offering enhanced sick pay, even in limited amounts, shows you prioritise your team's well-being, and helps to build a long-lasting connection.

And if budgets are tight, these benefits can be the most cost-efficient way to elevate your employer brand, attract top talent, and build a team that's second to none.

### 4. Prioritise retention

Our data shows that the average hospitality worker has been with their employer for almost six years, and in the industry for nine. That's a remarkable pool of talent and experience. But with **1 in 5** considering leaving the sector, we risk losing this valuable expertise.

While salaries and benefits matter, don't overlook the impact that regular performance reviews, career development plans, and mentorship programmes can have. These not only help boost your team's skills but also drive engagement, foster loyalty and support long-term growth.

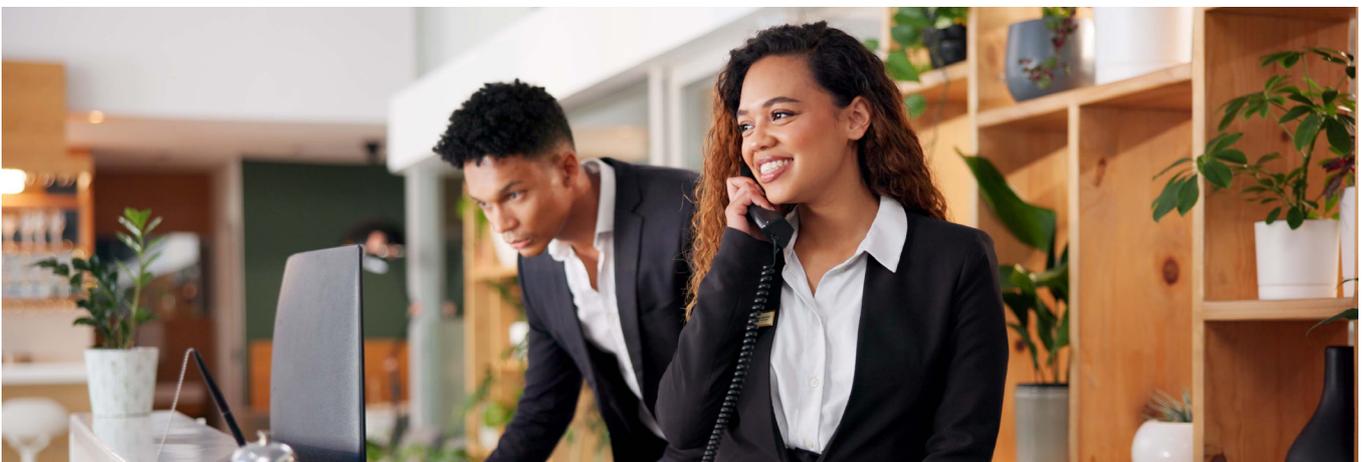
Also, with job security being a common concern, these ongoing conversations can help you alleviate any doubts and fuel their ambition instead.

### 5. Train managers to navigate salary conversations

It's not just what's on paper. Your frontline managers are key to handling pay and performance conversations.

Be sure to give them the right tools, information and training to manage these discussions effectively, ensuring transparency, fairness, and empathy. This will keep your team engaged and motivated, even when difficult conversations arise.

By making strategic, thoughtful changes, you can improve retention, attract top talent, and build a workforce ready to tackle the challenges of 2025 and beyond.



# Final thoughts

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So, there we have it. A complete run-through of the salary and benefit trends affecting hospitality today.

There's a lot to take in but remember having the right salary and benefit policies in place doesn't always require a complete overhaul. It's about making smart, strategic moves that serve your business. Even the smallest tweak can have a huge impact.

By focusing on competitive salaries, transparent pay practices, meaningful benefits, and a commitment to retention, you can build a team that stays loyal and motivated. With the right approach, you can not only overcome the challenges you face today but also position your business for long-term success.

By taking these steps, you're not only benefitting your business but contributing to a stronger, more robust hospitality industry.

At Caterer.com, we're here to support you every step of the way, offering the tools, insights, and expertise to help you create a thriving, engaged workforce.

If you'd like more information or would like to dive deeper into the data, you know where we are.

## Calvern James

Director of Hospitality,  
Caterer.com



# Caterer.com – the hospitality industry’s hiring partner

## Transform your hospitality hiring

We are Caterer.com.

We partner with you to deliver the hospitality talent your business needs to succeed.

Our extensive network of industry partners ensures we spotlight your roles to relevant hospitality candidates.

Helping you secure the people you need faster; we provide you with hiring insights, dedicated customer support and the latest tools throughout your recruitment journey.

For hospitality hiring that delivers, we are the name you can trust.

- **Innovative jobtech** to reach and engage the right candidates to your roles, reducing cost of hiring
- **Aggregator partners** that drive greater reach for your roles
- Build your talent pipeline by reaching a vast **hospitality-specific audience now**. We partner with key industry organisations such as The Institute of Hospitality, Springboard, HR in Hospitality, HIT Scotland, Hospitality Titans, Catering Scotland, Choose Hospitality and we deliver our jobs feed directly into some of their sites, ensuring your roles are seen amongst their extensive hospitality audiences
- **Dedicated Account Management** and Customer Success support
- We actively partner with **industry bodies, charities and organisations** to promote the industry as a great place to work and champion the fantastic people within it
- Gain access to additional relevant candidate audiences, at no extra cost. All jobs on Caterer.com also appear on our sister site Totaljobs, **expanding your reach into new talent pools across other sectors**
- **Employer brand advice and support** to help you elevate your brand
- Regular sector insights and guidance through **the Caterer.com Leadership Collaborative**, an open community that pulls on joint forces to provide peer-to-peer support, insight and learning to help leaders navigate through challenge and drive team growth and development and business success
- Access the **largest specialist hospitality talent pool**. With a database of over **4.8 million** profiles, each quarter an average **172k** active jobseekers make over **1.7 million** applications on Caterer.com, with over **4 million** site visits

# Hiring solutions

## Enhance your hiring campaigns with our portfolio of end-to-end recruitment solutions:

### Equality Boost

A diverse and inclusive workforce is key to strong business performance. Engage the right people for your roles in a diverse talent pool, by widening your hiring reach and taking new approaches to candidate targeting. Equality Boost can help you:

- Deliver a tangible impact on your DE&I strategy
- Extend your candidate reach into new and diverse talent pools
- Broaden the range of skills you attract to your business

### Programmatic

Find who you want, faster with programmatic targeting for a more efficient use of your high-volume hiring budget. Our sophisticated technology uses rule-based algorithms to distribute jobs to the best places throughout the entire web so you can pin-point the best candidates, quickly.

- Effortless integration with your ATS
- Only pay for the number of completed applications you receive
- Track performance in real-time and gain valuable insights to enable your campaign to be optimised quickly

### Visibility Solutions

It's crucial you reach the talent you need ahead of the competition. Reach the right candidates first and build your team by targeting and attracting relevant hires. Our innovative Visibility Solutions can help you:

- Broaden the reach of your message
- Enhance your potential to grow applications
- Increase the relevancy of applicants

### CV Database

Take control of your hiring and find the ideal person quickly by using our CV Database to search over 4.8 million profiles. Using our intuitive search and filters, you can easily find and contact the most relevant people for your jobs.

- Save your searches and receive an email as soon as matching candidates register or update their profiles
- Get ahead of the competition and be the first to find candidates who may not have applied to your jobs
- Receive relevant candidates directly to your inbox

### Database and methodology

Data for our sector guides (including Hospitality) comes from OTT; an in-house tool built by The Stepstone Group to analyse job postings and associated information (like salaries, regions, and skills). Using this tool, we analysed 17.4 million job ads across the UK. Data on vacancy and application numbers was sourced separately from an internal database in November 2024. Insights reflecting the perspectives of UK workers were drawn from a survey of 3,000 individuals conducted in November 2024, weighted to ensure representation by age, gender, and education across the UK workforce. Some industries were boosted to ensure robust data.

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